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**The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Youth, Education, and Libraries Committee
September 28, 2023 - 6:30 PM
Conducted Remotely via Zoom**

Please note: The resolutions contained in the committee minutes are recommendations submitted by the committee co-chairs to the Community Board. At the monthly full board meeting, the resolutions are discussed and voted upon by all members of Community Board 8 Manhattan.

Resolutions for Approval:

Item 1 – Resolution in Support of Requesting that the New York City Department of Education develop a plan to increase number of schools in District 2 that are fully accessible to students with physical disabilities

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Taína Borrero, Vlad Frants (Public Member), Ed Hartzog, Rebecca Lamorte, Addeson Lehv, Abraham Salcedo, Judy Schneider

Co-Chair Taína Borrero called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. She welcomed people to the meeting and introduced newly appointed Co-Chair Addeson Lehv.

1. Discussion on NYC Schools and Accessibility (Chalkbeat Reports [Only 1 in 3 NYC schools are fully accessible to students with physical disabilities](#))

- a. Co-Chair Borrero explained how only about a third of public schools city-wide were fully accessible. There are about 30 schools in the district, with roughly 10 not being fully accessible.
 - i. Despite this, no schools within Community Board 8 Manhattan are slated for accessibility upgrades in the 2020-2024 DOE Capital Plan.
- b. Public Member Vlad Frants directed the committee’s attention to the [Building Accessibility Profile](#) (BAP) for New York City Public Schools, which includes a spreadsheet that details the accessibility rankings for NYC Public Schools. This is the source data for the Chalkbeat Report.
 - i. School accessibility is ranked on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being fully accessible.
 - ii. For the purposes of the report, a “fully accessible” school was defined as one that scored either a 9 or a 10. This means that every educational facility in the building -- such as bathrooms on every floor, accessible cafeterias, and accessible libraries, among others -- is accessible.
- c. As an example, the committee examined P.S. 267, which received an accessibility score of 9 out of 10.
 - i. According to the BAP, every space in the building is accessible, except a single-use bathroom, which is not accessible. The location of the bathroom sink prevents the bathroom door from fully swinging open.
 - ii. Community Board Member Judy Schneider suggested that the committee reach out to the school’s local city councilmember to ask for funding to renovate the bathroom as a “quick fix” to the school’s accessibility issue.
- d. The committee then looked at Yorkville Community School, which received a 3 out of 10.

- i. According to the BAP, many community spaces at the school (including the library and nurses offices) are not accessible.
 - ii. Additionally, classrooms -- except those located on the first floors -- are not accessible.
- e. Jacob Plottel from Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright's office suggested that he would speak with the Assembly Member about potential solutions and would take into account the committee's resolution on the issue.
- f. Community Board Member Rebecca Lamorte recommended that schools that scored higher scores be prioritized first. That is, focus first on identifying and making the schools that are close to full accessibility fully accessible.
 - i. These schools need smaller financial upgrades, so it would likely be easier to secure funding for these projects. Renovation time and resources would also be lower for these smaller fixes. Some of these schools in the district that are close to full accessibility (i.e., received an 8 out of 10) include:
 - 1. P.S. 158 Bayard Taylor
 - 2. Yorkville East Middle School
 - 3. Eleanor Roosevelt High School
 - ii. This plan for improving school accessibility would allow for accessibility upgrades in the most expedient and practical manner possible -- with the ultimate goal being all schools being fully accessible.

Resolution for Approval:

WHEREAS, Advocates for Children of New York released a report on August 23, 2023 entitled "Access (Still) Denied: An Update on the Physical Inaccessibility of New York City Public Schools;

WHEREAS, according to the latest City data, the Department of Education operates more than 1,400 buildings that are each home to one or more schools or programs in 2023-24;

WHEREAS, of those for which accessibility status is available: 454 buildings (34.2%) are fully accessible (a BAP rating of 9 or 10); 263 buildings (19.8%) are partially accessible (a BAP rating between 3 and 8); 65 buildings (4.9%) are not fully accessible but are in the construction pipeline for accessibility improvements under the 2020-2024 Capital Plan; and 547 buildings (41.2%) are functionally or fully inaccessible and are not currently in the pipeline for renovations;

WHEREAS, according to this report, as of August 2023, only 33.6% of schools in District 2 are fully accessible and an additional 0% of schools are currently in the pipeline for accessibility improvements under the 2020-2024 capital plan;

WHEREAS, public schools within Community Board 8 fall within New York City Department of Education Community District 2;

WHEREAS, there are currently three schools (P.S. 158 Bayard Taylor, Yorkville East Middle School, and Eleanor Roosevelt High School) within Community Board 8 that are close to reaching full accessibility (i.e., received a BAP rating of 8 out of 10);

WHEREAS, Community Board 8 sees it as a top priority for the aforementioned schools within our district to receive financial upgrades to get them to full accessibility;

WHEREAS, Community Board 8 has an ultimate goal that all schools in District 2 and citywide become fully accessible but also recognizes that there is a need for accessibility upgrades to be made in the most expedient and practical manner possible;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Community Board 8 Manhattan calls on the leadership of New York City Department of Education in the next capital plan process to prioritize within District 2, the schools that are currently close to full accessibility in order to get them to full accessibility.

Approved Board Members: 7-0-0 (Yes: T.Borrero, V.Frants (Public Member), E.Hartzog, R.Lamorte, A.Lehv, A.Salcedo, J.Schneider)

2. Old Business. There were no old business items.

3. New Business

- a. Community Board Member Schneider alerted the committee to a broken lift at the 67th Street Library.
- b. Co-Chair Borrero emphasized the importance of using the term “disabled” over “handicap” as the latter is outdated.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:20pm.

Taína Borrero and Addeson Lehy, Co-Chairs